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ABRAHAM LINCOLN:

THE LESSONS TAUGHT BY HIS LIFE

AND

THE OBLIGATIONS IMPOSED BY HIS DEATH.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED AT

THE GLADES," FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND. APRIL 23d, 1865.

BY

LEWIS H. STEINER.

FREDERICK CITY, MD.

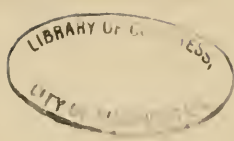
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1865.

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JOHN B. HARRIS



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UNALLOYED happiness finds no home on earth. Grief quickly follows joy, and the soul, sickened at such transition, is, at times, almost overwhelmed with despair. But to the Christian—both grief and joy are the gifts of a heavenly Father. Behind the frowning cloud there is the paternal care and solicitude of One who cares for His people, and whose ways, however dark and mysterious they may appear, are nevertheless the ways of Infinite Wisdom. Out of the darkness and gloom will come again bright and joyful scenes; and joy will follow grief once more. And so it must be in this vale of tears, for, to use the words of a Scotch writer, “Grief and joy, unlike as they appear in face and figure, are nevertheless sisters, and by fate and destiny, their verra lives depend on ane and the same eternal law. Were Grief banished frae this life, Joy would soon dwine awa into the resemblance o’ her departed Soror—aye, her face would soon be whiter and mair woe-begone, and they would soon be buried, side by side, in ae grave.” And this transition is but part of that preparation which is wisely ordained for man, in order to fit him for an abode where tears shall no longer have a place, but all shall be perennial joy.

This uncertain duration of joy and happiness is not confined to individuals or families. Communities, states, and nations are also exposed to its perturbing effects. The mysterious ways of Providence are manifested in them as well as in the lives of the humblest of their citizens. From the height of prosperity they may be plunged into the depth of misery and degradation; or the fair record of their honor and probity may be rendered as black as night by the crimes of some who should have labored to uphold such record. From the jubilant outcries of joyous hearts and happy souls they may be compelled to turn away, and, in bitter sorrow, to pour forth wail after wail, each striving to give expression to that grief which, indeed, beggars expression. Then is heard the voice, as in Ramah in former days, “lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachael weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children, because they were not.” But there is a balm even for such wounded hearts, even the word of the Lord: “Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded.”

Our nation has just passed through a transition such as I have described. Four years ago a formal outbreak against law and authority occurred, of such magnitude that our minds, unaccustomed to thoughts of war, could

hardly grasp its details. The degenerate descendants of an aristocracy, that once proudly claimed respect on account of its virtues and valorous deeds, had nursed so carefully the idea of their own importance and superiority in all that marks the true gentleman—had learned to despise the man of low degree, no matter how earnestly and honestly he might strive to raise himself, intellectually and socially,—and had for years fretted under the laws which the growing power of the people was wisely enacting for the good of the land. These haughty and intolerant men associated with them another class, alike haughty and intolerant, but from a different cause. Sprung from obscurity, some had gained wealth and position by honest efforts and hard labor, but had then assumed an air of superiority over those with whom their early years had been spent, treating contemptuously the very class it should have been their greatest happiness to have aided; others, by fraud and dishonesty, had simply gained wealth, and, feeling how uncertain position, based upon money alone, was in a republic, affected to despise the honest mechanic and the deserving laborer, who, in reality, may have possessed more excellencies of head and heart than they could even appreciate. There were others, fretful spirits, restless under law of any kind,—Ishmaelites, full of guile,—the scum of cities and country towns, too indolent to work, too proud to beg, but not too honest to violate law in any and every form. Of such materials was a grand conspiracy formed. Years were required in its formation, and all the ingenuity of the diplomatist, with the appeals to interest and personal advancement, that the Evil One always holds forth as inducements for enlistment in His service, were employed to gather into the conspiracy other men, whose names and characters had never before been stained by the slightest dishonor. In the fulness of its time this conspiracy burst upon the nation. At first, those who loved their country and the starry ensign of its honor, considered the proclamations and early utterances of the conspirators as mere vaporings,—the empty declamations of thoughtless penny-a-liners or briefless barristers. But the storm clouds became thicker and darker, the atmosphere was saturated with the unwholesome breathings of treason, and finally it was received as a fixed fact that ‘resistance to the powers that be’ was fully inaugurated.

Then was manifested that love of law and order, that loyalty to nationality, that sense of responsibility to God and our forefathers for the government which had protected us so many long years in our peaceful duties as citizens,—that disregard of self and family,—that high-toned patriotism, which filled our armies with men of all ranks and professions. Throwing aside the implements of agriculture, the tools of trade, and the books of the student, these extemporized soldiers began a war of *defence*. They felt that it would have been the vilest ingratitude to have hesitated to assume any duties that their country imposed on them in her hour of need. Every family, with loyal hearts, contributed in some way or other to the operations then deemed necessary. Armies were formed and instructed. Providence, when it was feared that there was no military talent adequate to the mighty problem, raised up for us, where we least expected it, wise, prudent, skilful and accomplished officers.

While our preparations were going on, those of the insurgents were not neglected. The very spirit of unrest and defiance made them at first more at home in war and warlike matters. Deluding the entire population of

the States to which they belonged, with the idea that the war was aggressive on the part of the Federal Government, they coaxed, deceived and cajoled them into a belief that they must seize arms with them for the conservation of their own rights. And when such arts failed (there were some men that would not bow to Belial, no matter in what form he was presented), then force was employed, and a reign of terror prevailed throughout their borders.

At first the love of peace and quiet so filled the hearts of loyal men, that, at times, they were almost prepared to say to the insurgents, "Take your course: leave us, if you do not appreciate the heritage left you by our common forefathers." But to such weak hearts courage came, when the calm resolution, the earnest determination, and the high resolve of the nation's Standard-Bearer was seen. When all seemed dark, not a ray of sunshine, or even the faintest flicker of a star could be seen penetrating the political firmament, he stood undisturbed. He had sworn in the presence of the nation "to faithfully execute the office of President of the United States," and, to the best of his ability, "to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States," and had called God to witness the oath. This oath he intended to keep, even though it should cost him his life. He feared to violate an oath,—a rare fear in an age when perjury had become a common vice in the land.

Oh, those four years of war, desolation, and misery! They are filled with a history of ruin and destruction. Millions on millions of property destroyed, fertile districts laid waste, thousands of homes desolated, and tens of thousands of fire-sides deprived of those who constituted all that made life dear to the bereaved. Oh, those terrible battle-fields, covered with the mangled corpses of thousands,—the air, for miles around, tainted with the sickening stench of putrefaction and sulphurous fumes! The scenes of suffering and pain amid crowded Hospitals filled with the fragmentary bodies of martyrs in a nation's defence! Some of us have seen these so frequently that we have almost forgotten how to weep,—but the scenes have been so indelibly photographed on the tablets of memory, that a century of peace cannot efface them. The land was becoming one vast Aceldama, and many a fertile region converted into a horrible Golgotha.

The earnest determination of the President, the patriotic valor of the army whose soldiers "gave their lives that the nation might live," the military genius of commanders whose knowledge of the science of war had been obtained in the field, and, above all, the propitious smiles of Providence,—all these at length began to secure victory after victory. The space occupied by the rebellion became smaller and smaller. Finally the seat of the rebellion falls, and the ablest military officer of the insurgent army, yielding to the stern logic of war, surrenders and offers to aid in the establishment of peace. The clouds have nearly all been driven from the sky, the sun shines once more serenely, and peace—fair, white-winged peace, with angelic grace is seen flying towards us with countless blessings in her train,—a strong government, liberty to every man in the nation to do his devoir for God and his native land,—and there, floating high over our heads, with her beauteous stripes the azure field of our country's flag, every star in place, and all bound together by a law that will allow them endless activity without possibility of rude contact or interference!

Was not all this cause for joy? No good citizen likes war, and the

nation had undertaken it, as a man uses a weapon when attacked by the assassin, to save his life. The good news was quickly carried through the length and breadth of our land. Young hearts beat with joyous exultation; old hearts grew young again. The bells rang out their merry peals, the wild huzzas of an overjoyed people mingled with the clear strains of national airs as martial and civic bands joined in the celebration of the coming event. And that flag, once disgraced within Sumter's walls, was raised, amid honor and rejoicing, proudly over a region re-claimed from rebellion. Such an intensity of happiness is rarely the lot of any people. And no one, who was permitted the privilege of participating in the rejoicing that followed the events just described, can ever forget how the patriotic longings of the people then found expression. In the prospect of peace not only was resentment laid aside, but fraternal love for the rank and file of the conspirators began to manifest itself throughout the land. Victorious, we could afford to be magnanimous to those who repented of their crimes, having been deluded or forced into practical treason by the leaders of the Rebellion. The Commander-in-Chief of the Army had granted terms of unprecedented liberality, and the President had shown himself free from malevolent feelings towards those who had for four years cultivated the bitterest hatred and the most malignant feelings towards him. On the evening of the 11th of April, in an address to his fellow-citizens, he spoke of the surrender of the principal insurgent army giving "hope of arighteous and speedy peace, whose joyous expressions cannot be restrained," and reminded his hearers that "in the midst of this, however, He, from whom all blessings flow, must not be forgotten."

But, on Friday night, while seated with the sharer of his toils and sorrows, the blow is struck by the assassin's hand which closes the career of this great and noble-hearted man. So paralyzing was the deed that brave men were rendered, for the instant, powerless, and the magnitude of the crime was so appalling that the infamous perpetrator made his escape from those who would have perilled their own lives to have saved that of their President.—

"O horror! horror! horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!
Confusion now hath made his master-piece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building."

The bells now toll forth the sorrowful knell of mourning, the sombre drapery of grief bedecks public and private buildings, flags are furled that had been floating proudly to the breeze, and one deep, impenetrable gloom gathers thick and fast over the hearts of all loyal citizens throughout the land. In the hour of triumph—when law and order were to be restored, when the enrapturing prospects of peace, all ablaze with the prismatic colors of the rainbow of promise, were widely extended before the patriot's eye,—the Standard-Bearer of the country, who had firmly stood unmoved in times that tried men's souls when an almost superhuman energy was necessary to resist the tide of treason,—the patriot and the lover of his country—is stiffened in the grasp of death. Victory seemed of no value, triumph empty, and success but a mocking phantom. Then was it first

known, how dear to the hearts of the people the late President had become, how his life was associated with the life of the nation, and his death robbed every family of one as near and dear to it as any of those embraced in the ties of blood. Said a simple-hearted, honest, God-fearing, Christian woman, whose steps are now fast tending towards the grave, "I cried when I heard it, because it seemed as if I had lost a father." Yes! the nation has lost a father, whose every thought and prayer was devoted to its interests and welfare,—self-sacrificing beyond example in a selfish age. No one knew how great the reciprocal love existing between people and President, until the murderous act deprived us of the foremost man of the times. And, whereas, we have delighted to call WASHINGTON the father of his country, it is now our pride to place by his side, as of equal glory and renown, and equally endeared to the American people—the name of ABRAHAM LINCOLN. GEORGE WASHINGTON, under God's protection, led the American nation out of the stormy trials and persecutions of foreign injustice into the pathway of prosperity and renown: ABRAHAM LINCOLN, under the protection of the same God—the God of our forefathers—led the nation through intestine troubles, that threatened to efface all that made it great and capable for good, and taught its people to understand how great their birth-right and how sacredly it should be guarded. The former died in peace, surrounded by his family at Mt. Vernon,—the latter fell a victim to the murderous hate of wicked patricides. Had such an act been predicted to us, we should have felt like using Shakspeare's words—as we scouted at the prediction,—

This Duncan hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking off."

But, my friends, I must hasten on. Let us now see who was this man, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, whose death has made a nation mourn, and each loyal man feel as though he had lost a father.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was born in Hardin county, Kentucky, February 12th, 1809, of parents who struggled honestly with poverty and toil for the support of their family. While the future President was quite a boy his parents removed to Indiana, and there, amid the wilds of primeval forests, a log hut was constructed, and a home created for the Pioneer's family. We know of but few incidents of his childhood: it is probable from these that the child's hands were employed to assist the father in his daily toil, while his mother taught him to read, using God's Holy Book as the text-book in her teachings. Although he lost his mother when only ten years of age, yet her teachings constituted the seed that, under the vigorous influences of Western life, developed eventually into those startling qualities of head and heart which gained him not only the respect, but the love of all with whom he was subsequently thrown into contact. How many of the world's great men have owed all that was noble and praiseworthy in their future lives to the instructions received at a mother's knee! Oh! mothers of this nation, how great a responsibility has been imposed upon you by Providence! On your quiet and unobtrusive labors the hopes and future glory of our land depend. See to it, that you implant principles of

morality, honesty and religion, with love of country and devotion to its rights, in the bosoms of your little ones. Pray for strength to accomplish the tasks assigned you. Yours, not the labors of the rougher walks of life, not the attractive honors of the bar, or the pulpit, or the tented field,—but the more glorious duties of preparing those who shall go forth with stout hearts and honest souls to undertake all such labors.

In a cabin, where a school had been opened by one of the settlers, MR. LINCOLN pursued his studies in additional branches of knowledge. He was faithful and laborious as a student,—a boy of but few books, but thoroughly acquainted with those that could be procured. His mental training was accomplished amid such literature as Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, "Æsop's Fables," "Weems' Life of Washington," and a campaign life of that other great commoner, Henry Clay. These were books calculated to develop hard common sense, disregard for ornaments of style, and love of right and honor. They aided in the formation of a character which challenged respect from all, as rugged in its honesty and unwavering in its love of truth.

Trained in all the work of the farm, he acquired a muscular frame and Herculean constitution, that seemed adequate to all the work that might fall to his lot in life. At times employed as a clerk in a country store, or in boating on the Mississippi, he acquired a reputation as a youth of promising business talent. At the age of twenty-one, he removed with his father to Illinois, and two years afterwards was made captain of a company of volunteers, raised for service in the Black Hawk war. Here, his biographer tells us, "He was an efficient, faithful officer, watchful of his men, and prompt in the discharge of his duty, while his courage and patriotism shrank from no dangers or hardships."

His fellow-citizens send him to the State Legislature in 1834, and two years afterwards he obtains a license to practise law, and opens an office in Springfield. He was three several times elected to the legislature, and in 1847 was one of the Whig representatives in the National Congress. From this time to the year 1860 he was engaged in the business of his profession, and actively interested in the various political movements of the day. His reputation was, however, mostly confined to the West, and but comparatively little was known of him in the East. His nomination to the Presidency was made in 1860, and was followed by an election to the highest position in our gift. Naturally, all felt anxious with reference to the future, when a new leader was placed at the head of the nation. The prayers of the good and the loyal were freely offered up to the Most High, that He might look with favor upon him, imbue him "with the spirit of wisdom, truth and mercy, and so rule his heart, and bless his endeavors, that law and order, justice and peace, might every where prevail."

Then the plotted treason of decades of years appeared fully ripe for action. A government, composed of the people, based upon a constitution springing from the people—the whole people, was that which he was called upon to administer. Fragmentary portions of it, more alive, selfishly alive to their own interests than to those of the whole, demanded the *right* to break the bond uniting all together, and thus put in jeopardy the lives and dearest interests of every one. Treason stalked abroad through the land, but LINCOLN, while imploring thought and reflection on the part of those dis-

posed to rebel, still stood firm amid the tumult of the times. Said he in his inaugural: "In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The Government will not assail you. You can have no conflict without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the Government, while I have the most solemn one to 'preserve, protect, and defend' it. I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic cord of memory, stretching from every battle-field and patriot grave to every living heart and hearth-stone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

The President's firmness gave vigor and strength to the national cause. His term of office was one of the most exciting character. The war was undertaken for the conservation of the government, but loyal men were very much divided on points that seemed to be of minor importance. In its course, the necessity of doing many things, which would not have been thought of at first, forced itself upon the nation. The Union was to be saved, and every thing that interfered with this must be given up. This principle Mr. LINCOLN laid down, and it was endorsed as sound doctrine by the loyal men of the land. The life of the nation was at stake, and whatever interfered with it must be abolished. There could be no compromise with wrong for the sake of right. "To secure a peace that should be lasting, or of any value at all, the eternal principles of justice must alone be consulted." This was high ground, but it was the only true ground to be occupied by the armies of the United States—a nation constructed on the theory of furnishing to every one of its citizens life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The war had thus an educational influence on the loyal people of the country,—they learned to occupy a higher plane on the broad field of history.

The deadly struggles that ensued between the defenders of right and the rebels, were more numerous than in any war of modern times. The whole land underwent a baptism in the blood of patriots, and the dear flag, carried through the fires of many a bloody fray, became an ensign of meaning to every citizen. And the survivors felt how precious *that* had become, for which such sacrifices were made. But no one felt this more keenly than the Chief Magistrate himself. In his speech at the dedication of the Cemetery at Gettysburg (Nov. 19, 1863,) he said: "The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it (the ground) far above our power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government *of* the people, *by* the people, and *for* the people, shall not perish from the earth."

In Mr. LINCOLN there was a singular union of some of the brightest characteristics of the true man. A word as to these:

I. *Honesty of purpose, and freedom from deceit.* This, to our infinite shame, be it spoken, is a rare virtue at the present day. The age had so tolerated pretence and meaningless show in high places, that the contrast at first was striking. Here was a man who knew not how to lie,—a curious characteristic, and one making him unfit for diplomacy and the intrigues of State, says the diplomatist of the old school. But where the need of deceit and intrigue when one loves truth, and is only anxious for right? Hence, the representatives of foreign governments respected this man, because they could confide in him. However much they might differ with him, they could rely on his position, when once defined, as the result of an honest belief that he was right.

II. *Disregard of self.* There was a wonderful absence of self-love or egotism in this man. He delighted to advance others—to lend a helping hand to merit wherever found, and whenever prosperous results attended military operations, to attribute such to those who planned them. In his last speech, when speaking of the successes of the campaign, these words were employed: "I, myself, was near the front, and had the high pleasure of transmitting much of the good news to you. But no part of the honor for plan or execution is mine. To Lieut. Gen. Grant, his skilful officers and brave men, *all* belongs." This disregard of self led him to overlook those precautions, which his friends desired him to take in order to prevent attacks from his enemies. On the face of the globe there is no prince or potentate whatever, who would so fearlessly expose himself to danger as our late President. When the public demanded that he should be attended by a body-guard, he submitted for a little while, but soon practically rid himself of it by not employing it.

III. *Kindness of heart for the whole race, conjoined with a forgiving disposition to his enemies.* The former was seen in his family and social relations, and the readiness with which he aided the poor, whether in the army or in civil life. When the news of his nomination for the Presidency in 1860 reached him, he was with some friends in the office of the State Journal in Springfield,—while the cheers of his friends were given with a will, he put the telegram in his pocket and quaintly said, "There's a little woman down at our house would like to hear this—I'll go down and tell her." When Ellsworth, who had been a student in his office, was lying dead—one of the first victims of the war—the President wept over his remains with bitter grief. I do not wish to lay the scenes of any man's family circle open to the public gaze, but this man's gentleness with his beloved ones at home, and how he used to read his favorite poet to wife and children after the labors of the day were over—these have been told me by one who knew the facts, and it is not wrong to state them now. With an ear ever open to tales of woe, he was often induced to use executive clemency, when a real case for punishment was involved. His magnanimity disdained to trample on a fallen foe, and with victory, he readily forgave those who had been his bitterest enemies. He had no anger for the South, no resentment for those who vilified his character, caricatured his personal appearance, and poured forth all the foul slanders that the father of lies could produce from his own arsenal. Little souls indulge in malice and jealousy. This man was above such feelings. In the language that has been attributed to Gen. Lee himself, concerning Mr. Lincoln's character—"he was *the epitome of magnanimity and good faith.*"

IV. *Industry and Patient Perseverance.*—Much of these was required of a man at the helm of state during the tempestuous years through which we have just passed. The exhausting character of the labors that devolved upon the Chief Magistrate of our nation, even when peace reigned throughout our borders, was such as to demand a strong constitution and a willingness to work possessed by but few men. But when the machinery of Government was increased in quantity and complexity by the needs and requirements of a state of war, then almost superhuman energy, industry and perseverance were required to superintend the whole so as to obtain the maximum of activity with the minimum of friction. Fortunately, with the will to work, Mr. Lincoln possessed an iron constitution and indefatigable industry, and no man could have more faithfully labored to do the work allotted him. In season and out of season, day and night, he knew no rest; there was a great task assigned him and it must not be slighted.

V. *Genial Flow of Spirits.*—Amid all this earnestness and honesty, and freedom from self and gentleness of soul, he was pre-eminently endowed with great elasticity of spirit, which enabled him to throw off the cares of his station, even when most weighty, and to enjoy the society of friends or strangers. It is true his manners were not fashioned after the Chesterfieldian School, he was too truthful a representative of nature's nobleman for that; nor was his conversation in imitation of any special model of what rhetoricians would consider classic English, he had grown up among men whose rugged thoughts and colossal ideas defied expression in any of the tawdry refinements of dandified English. He was the type of an honest, great soul that disdained the decoration of art, that employed words to convey, and not to conceal ideas, and he hesitated not to join in the merry laugh or the humorous joke when they might be introduced by others. And here a word is necessary as regards his fondness for anecdote. The press very unwisely has created the impression that Mr. Lincoln constantly employed anecdotes in all his conversations and speeches, merely as means of provoking laughter, or giving amusement to company. Hence, many have hardly understood the real serious side of Mr. Lincoln's character, and only looked upon him as a man given to continuous joking. This was not the case, and great injustice has been done him by such an idea. With Mr. Lincoln anecdotes were employed either as means of ridding himself of troublesome bores, or in the place of illustrative arguments. The habit had been acquired in his Western life, and his illustrations always carried a force with them that few abstract arguments could. His freshness of thought and novelty of illustration made his conversation acceptable to men who were weary of the set phrases of meaningless conventionalism.

VI. *Love of Country.*—This was all-absorbing. Every faculty of mind, all his powers of soul and body were absorbed in this. He allowed no party prejudice to prevent him doing justice to all who seemed actuated by a similar feeling. His appointments were frequently made from those who had been his bitter political opponents; and no man was thrown lightly aside who seemed willing to labor in his country's cause. He had consecrated his time, his talents, his life, his all, to the service of that country. Hear him at Independence Hall, February 22, 1861, and how singularly prophetic are his words, when looked at in the light of recent events—then happily unknown to him, and unsuspected by the nation:—

"I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. * *

I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of the separation of the Colonies from the mother-land, but something in that Declaration giving liberty, not alone to the people of this country, but hope for the world for all future time. * * This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved upon that basis? If it can, I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world, if I can help to save it. If it can't be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. *But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it.* *

* * *I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, in the pleasure of Almighty God, die by.*" Here was the language of one who went, with high resolve, and unwavering trust in the mission of his country, to undertake whatever tasks might fall to his lot. And, if these imperilled his life, he will not shrink from his fate. Like the Roman Knight, he will willingly leap into the gulf, if the nation can be saved by such a sacrifice. Here is an example for you, my fellow-countrymen, worthy of all imitation.

"Let all the ends thou aim'st at be—thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's!"

Standing at the grave of this martyr to the cause of free government, ask God to kindle into a bright flame whatever sparks of patriotism may be lurking in your breasts—pray that you may be worthy of your birthright as citizens of a republic, and that you may be able, whenever restive under law and authority, to take to heart these words of inspiration: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil."

VII. *Faith in God and His protecting Providence.*—From the first, Mr. Lincoln, in addition to his love of country had a strong and enduring faith that it was designed by Providence to perform a great part in the history of humanity, and that God might chasten—how much no man could tell—but would bring it out of the fire purer and better fitted for its work. In bidding farewell to his friends in Springfield, he said, "A duty devolves upon me which is, perhaps, greater than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never could have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied. I feel that I cannot succeed without the same Divine aid which sustained him, and on the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support, and I hope you, my friends, will all pray that I may receive that Divine assistance without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain." This faith kept him firm when the darkest horrors were impending. Reverses, defeats, even utter routs did not cause him to waver. The issues of the whole were in the hands of God.

It was our duty to defend the liberties he had given us. There was, at times, in this firm faith much that resembled Cromwell's command to his men—"Put your faith in God and—keep your powder dry."—that is, trust in God, but employ all the means placed within your reach to execute the task he has assigned you. Prayers went up for him, not only from those old friends in Illinois, but all over the land. We learned to love the man whose purpose was so high, and whose claims to our confidence so justified by his own inherent fitness. Resting on these prayers offered up to a prayer-hearing God, he tired not in well-doing, but was ready for any sacrifice. This faith is the brightest jewel in the character of ABRAHAM LINCOLN. Let us all try to cultivate faith in God, who has thus far led us on our way amid clouds and perils, through the dangers of the field, and the far greater dangers of evil spirits at home, in whose breasts the evil One has sown the seeds of disobedience to law. Then shall the shining example of our late President not be lost upon those who are left behind, and the God of our fathers will be with us through whatever dangers may hereafter beset our path.

I have endeavored, my friends, to present in a brief manner, some idea of him who was called in the providence of God to be the foremost man of the age. It has been impossible to dwell upon all points of his character, because hours only would suffice for the task. Hence, I have not said any thing about those intellectual qualifications which shone so brightly when pure statesmanship was required. It has been my endeavor to give you an idea of the man—ABRAHAM LINCOLN—and those qualities of spirit and soul that made him the object of the nation's love. His name was a household word at home, and those foreign nations that had once held him up to scorn and derision, were now honest in their expressions of admiration for the earnest, great man.

The ship of state had been guided through the storm and tempest in safety, and was approaching secure anchorage; the shout, "land ho!" was heard from those on the look-out, when the inhuman assassin does his work, and the helms-man is carried away at the moment of triumph. Rest on earth from his labors was not granted him; but his spirit is now in His presence, who is a righteous God, and one loving mercy, and *there*, in humble submission, bowing our heads low in the dust, we leave it, and pray that we may be able to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

His works shall live, and his example must ever be one for imitation by all who love their country. Thus, although dead, he will continually be with us as a guardian spirit to that country for which he lived, labored and died.

But, while love causes us to linger by the remains of ABRAHAM LINCOLN, let us not forget the stern duties which his assassination imposes upon the nation. These we cannot throw off, even if we shrank from their performance. It is not vengeance we counsel, but justice. Look at the act, evidently the result of much thought and careful deliberation, coolly and skilfully planned, completed under circumstances that made it most appalling to the partner of his life, in the midst of an assembly of his countrymen intent on pleasure, and exultant at the prospect of peace. See the assassin deliberately eyeing his victim, quietly stealing behind him, and over the very shoulders of the wife firing the deadly weapon that forever should put out the life of the family and the hope of the nation.

Picture to yourselves the gallant young officer vainly endeavoring to seize the murderer so as to secure instant punishment for his diabolical crime, forgetting his own wound in his efforts to bring to punishment the assassin—that piercing cry of the young woman—‘*Stop that man—the President is shot.*’—the assassin’s leap on the stage, rending his country’s flag in the effort, the shrieks of horror, and the cries of agony from all present, and his cool deliberation in escaping from the hands of those who would seize him. Is not the scene one that would make angels weep, and the malicious demons of the lower world shout in hellish triumph, that a human being had rivalled them in a deed of black malignity and horror?

But these are not all the horrors of that night. See an accomplice, alike on murderous deed intent, forcing his way into the presence of the Secretary of State (stretched on a bed of pain and suffering), and doing that which the sentiment of both civilized and savage life pronounces the most cowardly of all deeds—striking a man when he is unable to defend himself—and dealing serious if not mortal wounds to sons and friends who rush to the aid of the defenceless victim.

In all the annals of crime, even in the times of the French Revolution, when horrors accumulated so fast that the very soul sickens at the thought of those dark deeds, there has never been more horrible pictures than these. Well may the Secretary of War ask that “the stain of innocent blood be removed from the land by the arrest and punishment of the murderers,” and exhort “all good citizens to aid public justice on this occasion. Every man should consider his own conscience charged with this solemn duty, and rest neither night nor day until it be accomplished.”

The whole series of crimes, however, demonstrates with almost mathematical certainty that the direct perpetrators of these have been aided by numerous *active* accomplices. And here the question naturally arises—how great the extent of this conspiracy? Has its main object been accomplished, or will blows, secret and cowardly, yet be struck? Who shall be the next victims? What man of prominence or quiet citizen shall next be the mark for the assassin’s knife, or his deadly pistol? I am not an alarmist, but these questions are important; they concern our future security. No man can at once become an assassin. The process of demoralization is slow, but sure when once it begins, and in the end the man loses all the moral attributes of his race, and becomes a wild animal, subject to the influences that regulate and determine the acts of that class of beings. The taste of blood once experienced, and all control over the animal is gone. He rages and riots in blood. Swift, speedy and terrible punishment can alone afford security in the future for the nation.

How many are justly chargeable with a direct agency in producing the demoralization that culminated in these crimes we know not; but the horrible fact stares us in the face that in December, 1864—an advertisement appeared in the Selma (Ala.) *Dispatch*, offering for a million of dollars to secure the assassination of the President, Vice President and Secretary of State, and this advertisement failed to create that horror in the region where it appeared, that should have been at once produced. And back of this—has not every man, woman and child, throughout the length and breadth of the land who *actively* or *passively* took part in the rebellion against law and authority, either by open participation in the bloody war that has been waged against the government, or by secret sympathy with

the same, has not every such person some responsibility for the demoralization that terminated in this crime? Does not the blood of the murdered President cry aloud to each of these—ye had a share in this deed, and aided in the crime that now pollutes the annals of our history?

"Not all the perfumes of Arabia" will sweeten the land on which this innocent blood has been shed. Repent, ye that have wandered from the practices of your forefathers—and have set at defiance the holy teachings of the Book of inspiration. It is manly to acknowledge error, it is manly to beg forgiveness and to ask God's help, that you may henceforward walk as in His sight, pleasing God and obeying the authorities set over you by His appointment; it is more than manly to do all this, for thereby you join the band of those returning prodigals which a merciful Father will receive with a forgiveness freely extended for their sins, for the sake of Him who died that penitent sinners might live, and who said to the malefactor on the cross, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

One word as to the duty of good citizens in this perilous crisis. If ever there was a time when faith in God's divine protection was needed it is now. In Him alone can there be found protection and defence, and He has taught His people to come to Him at all times with their sorrowful burdens. Prayer, for guidance to our rulers, prudence in the hour of trouble, strength to bear our afflictions, wisdom to direct the machinery of government, justice to punish malefactors, mercy to pardon minor offenders who are penitent, and patriotic love for our dear country,—prayer for these is now a duty which is not to be neglected by any Christian.

We cannot afford to do wrong in the name of right and justice. These need no such adjuncts. Let the sentence, which Congress has ordered henceforth to be stamped upon all our national coins, be indelibly impressed upon our hearts—"in God is our trust."

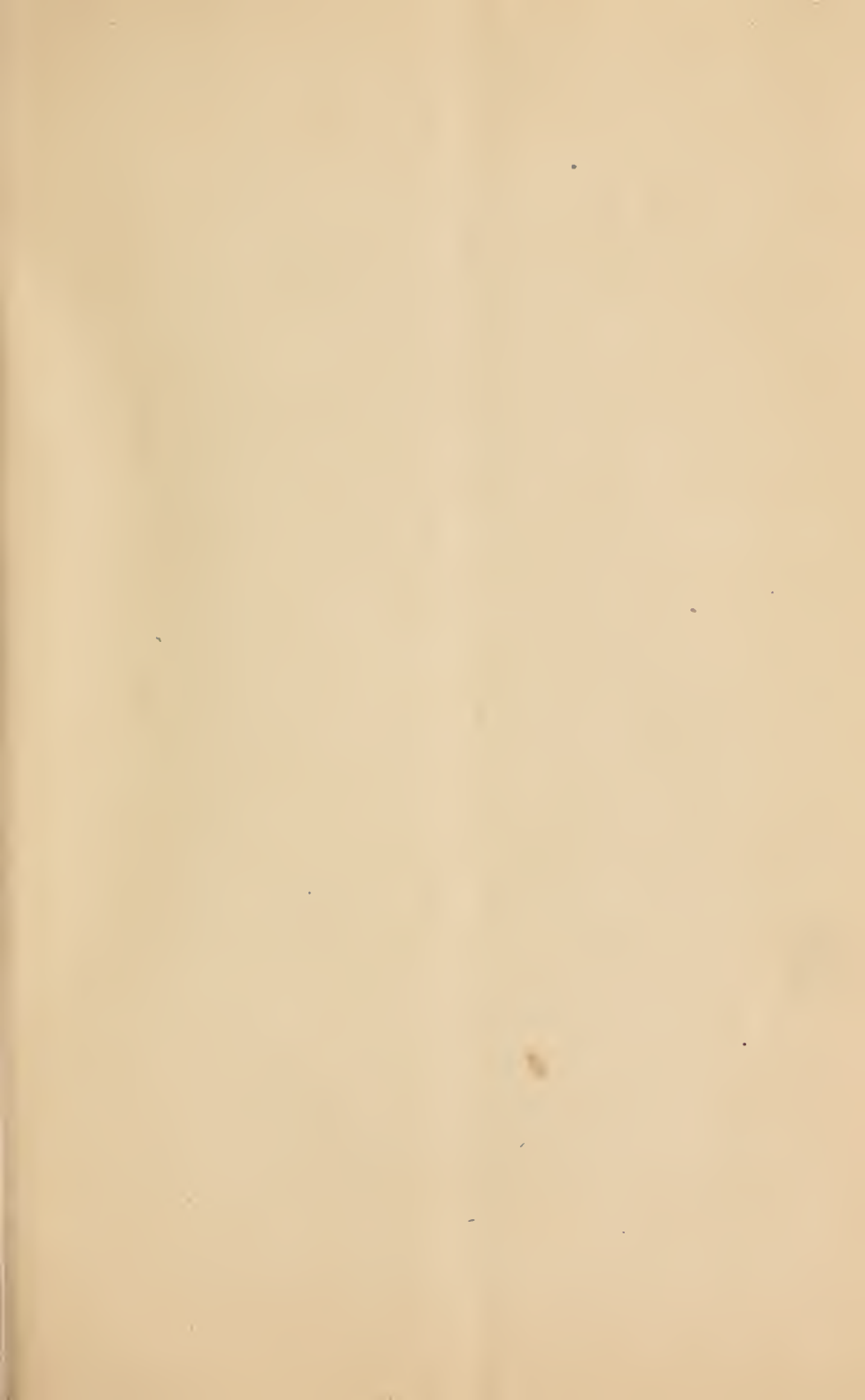
Let the closing words of the late President's last Inaugural be taken to heart and appropriated by all:

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans; to do all that may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

And now, my friends, in closing this tribute to the memory of President LINCOLN, and this sketch of the lessons taught us by his life, with the obligations imposed by his death, need I add one word of apology because it has been given you in the house of God and on His holy day. The lesson of the times has been presented for our perusal by the Father Himself. I have endeavored to spread it before you, as a Christian man would to his brethren, in the spirit of Him, who, although He forgave His persecutors, foretold the day when the *wicked* should be banished "to eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Justice is tempered with mercy to those who repent from their sins,—but to the impenitent justice in all its naked terror shall be meted out.

May God grant us all grace to perform the duties assigned us here, to serve Him in truth, and to cherish a love for that country where freedom reigns and a refuge is afforded to the oppressed and persecuted of the earth!

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